

## "Midwives getting organised"

Organising in a union context is about transforming our workplaces through collective action. In this introductory course for newly elected workplace representatives, you will explore your role in MERAS democratic structures, campaigns and influence.

The course consists of two introductory on-line modules followed by a one-day face-to-face workshop in your region. It is being run as an approved Employment Relations Education (ERE) course called "Organising in Our Workplace".

The aim is to increase your confidence as a workplace representative. You will be provided with a range of information, materials and resources to empower you to be active in your workplace.

You will share ideas on how to grow the presence of MERAS in your workplace, recognise recruitment opportunities, and increase your knowledge of workplace rights.

You may be entitled to Employment Relations Education Leave (EREL) which provides for paid leave to attend this approved union course. The union's entitlement is limited by the number of union members with each employer and how many days we have used each year. If we do not have enough entitlement, you could use QLP study days as these are leadership training opportunities.

Day	Time	Place
Tuesday 24 March	9am-4pm	Palmerston North
Tuesday 31 March	9am-4pm	Christchurch
Tuesday 7 April	9am-4pm	Auckland

## "Midwives standing up"

"Organising is leadership that enables people to turn the resources they have into the power they need to make the changes they want." (Ganz, Marshall (2010). "Leading Change: Leadership, Organization and Social Movements".)

In this second course, we will explore how we can empower our members to use their own resources to resolve problems in the workplace. We will discuss what is meant by a "problem-solving culture" and your role in facilitating this.

You will discuss processes and forums you can participate in to represent your members' views. You will also develop skills and strategies in progressing and resolving collective workplace issues, and a plan for building the profile and presence of MERAS.

The course will cover the concept of fair process as it applies to competency and performance issues so you can support members who have been called into a meeting with management after a complaint or incident. You will also learn how you can enlist support from our union staff in your role.

The course is approved for ERE as "A Problem-Solving Culture" so you can use EREL or you can use QLP study days to attend on paid leave. Completion of our first course is a pre-requisite for attending "A Problem-Solving Culture".

Day	Time	Place
Tuesday 26 May	9am-4pm	Palmerston North
Tuesday 2 June	9am-4pm	Christchurch
Thursday 4 June	9am-4pm	Auckland



NRC rep Verity O'Connor (left) with Leila Sparrow at the Wellington "Midwives Getting Organised" course.



NRC rep Michelle Archer (2nd left) with fellow Southern reps at the Dunedin women's leadership course.



NRC rep Jo Simpson (left) and Jill with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern at the Hamilton CTU-Government Forum.

## **“Midwives leading midwives”**

### **Workplace Representatives Forum, Quality Inn, Parnell, 11-12 August 2020**

On 12 August we will hold the inaugural MERAS national forum at the Quality Inn in Parnell, Auckland. The forum is open to all workplace representatives.

An important part of our union democracy, this will coincide with our MERAS 2020 Annual General Meeting to be held at the hotel conference venue on the evening of 11 August.

The forum is being run as an approved ERE course, “Democracy and Industry Economics”. The course aims to develop collective understanding of our union history (where we have come from) and to inspire active participation by MERAS members in strategies to enhance recognition of the midwifery profession in our workplaces, communities and the health sector (where we want to be).

2020 is a significant year for our union. We will be completing work on the Midwifery Accord and the Midwifery Pay Equity claim. We will be developing our bargaining strategy for the DHBs MECA, which will be underway by the end of the year.

2020 is also an Election Year. MERAS is actively involved in the Council of Trade Unions’ campaign to re-elect a progressive Government and this forum will be an opportunity for workplace reps to share ideas to maximise our members’ participation in the campaign.

Flights and accommodation for out-of-towners will be organised by MERAS. We will be encouraging car-pooling in the Northern Region from Taupo upwards. You will need to register by **1 June 2020**.

For further information, advice and support:

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*Venue for Workplace Reps' Forum 2020, Quality Inn Hotel, Parnell in Auckland.*



Midwifery Employee  
Representation & Advisory Services

[www.meras.midwife.org.nz](http://www.meras.midwife.org.nz)

## **MERAS Workplace Representatives Education Schedule 2020**



*Tauranga and Waikato Hospital workplace reps work collaboratively on a problem at the Hamilton “Midwives Standing Up”, the second of MERAS union education courses.*